

# SOCIAL ACTION NEWSLETTER

PUBLISHED MONTHLY, EXCEPT JULY AND AUGUST, BY THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL EDUCATION AND  
SOCIAL ACTION, DIVISION OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION, THE UNITED CHRISTIAN MISSIONARY SOCIETY  
MISSIONS BUILDING  
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

222 DOWNEY AVENUE

PRICE: \$1.00 PER YEAR INCLUDES SOCIAL ACTION RESEARCH BULLETIN

NO. IV VOL. IV

APRIL

1941

## INDIANA CHURCH ADOPTS EMERGENCY PROGRAM

Accepting the emergency created by the national defense program and concerned not to be caught unprepared should the nation be dragged into war, the Tabernacle Christian church, Franklin, Indiana, Richard E. Lentz, pastor, has adopted "The Program of the Church and the National Emergency."

The program was worked out by a committee including in its membership, in addition to Mr. Lentz, a banker, a merchant, an educator, and a housewife. The purpose of the program is to meet certain conditions arising out of such circumstances as the drafting of young men into military service, members who may choose the conscientious objector camps, those who are at work in the numerous defense construction activities in Indiana or in one or another of the defense industries, plus preparation for even greater emergencies that may arise in the future. Thus it is one local church's "Preparedness Program."

"The Tabernacle Christian Church recognizes its responsibility for the spiritual welfare and service of all who are members of the congregation, regardless of their views or needs growing out of the war. Also all other persons who may come within the sphere of the influence of the Tabernacle Church will be given the fullest help consistent with their needs and the Christian religion. To the end that this church minister to all Christian people, whether objectors or participators or victims of the war, may be carried on with efficiency and Christian understanding the Tabernacle Christian Church has set the following goals.

"1. Create a sustaining fellowship for those persecuted locally for their nationality or views concerning the war.

2. Create a committee in the local church to (a) help maintain the morale of families broken by enlistment, conscription, war work elsewhere, or other war or defense activities. (b) Preserve contacts through regular letters, etc., with those absent in military camps, conscientious objector camps, war construction or industrial employment, in order that Christian ideals may be kept before those who are away from their church home. This contact is planned to counteract unwholesome influences that are present near some centers of defense activity. (c) Compile accurate lists of church and church school constituency involved in the draft and check (draft) 'calls.' Keep accurate mailing lists of those absent. (d) Send church

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## MALVERN CONFERENCE COMES TO THE UNITED STATES

Last month Social Action Newsletter summarized the findings of the so-called Malvern Conference held in England in February in which a group of influential Anglican churchmen, lay and clerical, proposed a radical program of reorganization for Europe as a post-war goal. Backed by the Archbishop of York, second only to the Archbishop of Canterbury in the Church of England, deans, priests, members of parliament, writers and other religious leaders, the findings of that gathering have attracted worldwide attention, especially as emanating from one of the most conservative religious communions in the world. Even more sensational than the Lambeth proposals for church unity of a quarter of a century ago, the findings of the Malvern Conference are likely to be the subject of many a religious conference in the next few years.

First in the United States to convoke a conference to study the Malvern proposals was the Church League for Industrial Democracy, liberal social action group of the Protestant Episcopal Church. The Episcopal Church, like its parent church, the Church of England, is usually considered to be a bulwark of safe, solid social and economic conservatism. Its numerical strength lies in the older, more stable regions of the nation where wealth and leisure have given time and opportunity for the development of culture. Like the Anglican church, too, is the fact that within this matrix of religious and social conservatism lies a nucleus of social radicalism. Perhaps it is both more aggressive and more in the public eye because of the background out of which it arises. At any rate, the annual meeting of the Church League for Industrial Democracy, in session at New Haven, Connecticut the first week in March spent its entire time in studying the Malvern conference report. Result: the 450 delegates, including four bishops and numerous other influential churchmen, adopted a statement (Time, March 10, 1941) declaring, "We subscribe to the Malvern Resolutions in spirit, also in letter except insofar as local circumstances require modification." From this general endorsement the following details were selected for emphasis:

1. Production for use instead of profit, and abolition of the "profit motive."
2. Communal ownership of the means of production, especially of natural resources "as a storehouse of divine bounty on which we all utterly depend."

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## CAMPAIGN FOR C.O. SUPPORT IS UNDER WAY

Given unanimous approval by the Commission on Budgets & Promotional Relationships of the International Convention at its meeting in Indianapolis in February, the campaign to raise \$3,500 to care for Disciple Conscientious Objectors who are to be assigned to Civilian Public Service camps in lieu of military service is under way. The first move was the sending out of a letter to the membership of the Disciples Peace Fellowship over the signature of Dr. Myron Taggart Hopper, president of the Fellowship, calling attention to the need, reminding members that the Fellowship was organized for just such an emergency and urging immediate contributions. Results from this letter are already coming in and can be expected in increasing volume. Backed by an imposing list of brotherhood leaders, including such names as that of Hampton Adams, F.W. Burnham, Gaines M. Cook, C.A. Cole, Warren Grafton, F.H. Groom, Alden Lee Hill, Ray Hunt, J.B. Hunter, Harry Ice, Clarence Lemmon, Warner Muir, Edwin Osborn, W. Paul Reagor, and others, a communication has been sent to the nearly 2000 persons who have enrolled as Conscientious Objectors on the record of their local churches & with the office of the Department of Social Welfare.

Had it not been for delay in clearing details with various government bureaus for the use of camp sites for these Civilian Public Service camps large numbers of Conscientious Objectors would already be in camps. The American Friends Service Committee had its camp administrative personnel ready and on the payroll February first and the Mennonite and Church of the Brethren groups have been ready to open camps projected by them, awaiting clearance with governmental agencies. This delay has not been due to the church agencies but to inability of the federal government to make final release of camp properties to the groups sponsoring camps. All this means that when details are finally completed large numbers of Conscientious Objectors will be ready for camp and funds for their support must be found. It is therefore essential that gifts - generous gifts - be made quickly and in large numbers.

An encouraging tendency is noted to interpret these camps not as means whereby certain individuals are excused from military training, but as schools for training men of deep consecration for important Christian service. It is confidently expected that out of these camps a group of men will be found who will dedicate their lives to the gospel of Christian reconciliation. Such men would follow soldiers right into battle, rescuing the wounded, succoring refugees, helping war-ridden populations to clear up their farms, rebuild their homes and somehow put life together again. Already such men and women have fed hungry populations on both sides of the line in Spain, are now feeding refugees in southern France, children in both Occupied & Unoccupied France and in Germany. These are ambassadors of Christian love. Once in the Middle Ages young men forsook the world to become messengers of the Cross. They won large areas of the North & South American continents to the Church. It is possible that out of the desolation and despair of war and the disintegration of the social order a new thrust of Christian missions is in the process of birth. These men may be its heralds!

## TENNESSEE NEWSPAPERS FIGHT POLL TAX LAWS

Quoting Aristotle's dictum that a poll tax is "a most ignominious imposition, which none but slaves paid to tyrants," the Nashville Tennessean, the Chattanooga Times, the Memphis Press-Scimitar and the Knoxville News-Sentinel recently featured a series of articles by Jennings Perry, associate editor of the Tennessean, denouncing the law and demanding its repeal. The entire series was inserted in Congressional Record by Congressman Lee E. Geyer of California.

Only eight states require the payment of a poll tax as a requisite for voting - Tennessee, Virginia, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas & Texas. It was originally instituted by the Romans as a badge of servility on subjugated peoples. It was for the purpose of enrollment for the payment of this tax that took Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem at the time of the birth of Jesus, an enrollment which, incidentally, was resisted by a Jewish uprising led by Judas 'the Gaulonite' which was put down by bloody brutality. Enactment of poll tax laws as a test of the right to vote began about the time of the Populist movement and poll tax laws were enacted in Tennessee in 1890, in Virginia in 1902, and in other states about the same time.

The effect of poll tax laws is to keep a large number of citizens away from the polls. The revenue obtained from the tax is negligible in comparison with the total tax receipts. The reason frequently given - disfranchisement of Negroes and irresponsible whites - is not altogether sound, since party leaders in some states consistently solicit such of these votes as can be controlled. The law is useful to politicians since it gives them an opportunity to control elections by controlling poll tax receipts.

What the poll tax law has done in reducing participation in elections in Tennessee is shown by the following table showing the percent of the eligible vote cast in elections over a period of 50 years:

1888 (no poll tax)	90 percent
1892 (poll tax)	71
1896	80
1900	68
1904	58
1908	60
1912	57
1916	60
1920 (woman suffrage)	46
1924	29
1928	34
1932	35
1936	30
1940	27

Against this record Mr. Perry places the voting record of the non-poll tax states, showing the percentage of adults voting in each for the presidential election years 1932, 1936 & 1940:

1932:	
Poll tax states	36 percent
Non-poll tax states	70
1936:	
Poll tax states	24
Non-poll tax states	72
1940:	
Poll tax states	37
Non-poll tax states	81

## ON SOCIAL FRONTIERS

Indicative of the prosperity now being enjoyed by the aircraft industry is the report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor showing that employment in January 1941 was 4945 percent of 1923-25 average for the industry and that payrolls were 746.4 percent of those of the same period. Wages have increased 25494 percent since Jan., 1940. Prior to the unionization drive of the last year wages for airplane builders were far below those of the automobile industry.

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Delinquency complaints from Laurel Homes, public housing project in a former overcrowded worn-out housing section of Cincinnati were only 8.6 in 1940 as against an average of 72 in other underprivileged areas of the city. Juvenile authorities are unanimous in their testimony that decent housing, playgrounds, and better care are the weapons with which to fight juvenile delinquency and crime.

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Indiana Selective Service authorities report that 149 conscientious objectors had been classified up to March 1. Of this number, 49 had been called as their numbers had been called. That is to say, except for their C.O. status they would already have been inducted into the Military service. These individuals are therefore ready for Civilian Public Service camps and will be sent when the camps are ready. It is expected that a total of approximately 450 C.O.s. will be classified in the first draft.

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Late in February Defense Commissioner Sidney Hillman made public figures to show that of the total working time of the entire year 1940 less than two hours per worker were lost because of strikes. In contrast, 5 days per worker were lost because of injuries and 8 days per worker because of sickness. Concentration of public attention on strike losses is a part of the resent national defense psychology and can easily be used by anti-labor employers to create adverse public opinion against workers who seek redress of legitimate grievances. One of the most notable labor disturbances is in the plants of Bethlehem Steel which is making millions out of huge defense orders, but whose workers were unable even to discuss collective bargaining with management until the government intervened.

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Industrial cooperatives developed in West hina to give work to the millions of refugees from the coastal country now number 3,000 and are producing goods worth over \$500,000 (U.S.) per month. Eighty thousand persons now find self-help through these cooperatives. It is planned to increase the number of individual industrial cooperatives to 30,000 in order to assure permanence to the movement.

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The FBI investigated the fingerprint cards of 576,920 persons arrested by state officers for year ending Dec. 31, 1939. Of these 108,57 were youth under 21; 202208 were under 25. Of the 9,926 arrested for liquor law violations, 28 (7.6%) were under 21; 1,895 (19.9%) were under 25. Of 24,309 arrested for driving while intoxicated, 1,011 (4.2%) were under 21; 3,915 (16.1%) were under 25. Disorderly conduct arrests numbered 27,996, of whom 4,167 (14.9%) were under 21; 9,013 (32.2%) were under 25. Drunkenness arrests 90,989 - included 4,001 (4.4%) under 21; 12,775 (14%) under 25.

## BREWERS SUBSIDIZE TAVERNS

That it has been a common practice for Missouri brewers to advance money to tavern owners for fixtures and licenses and sometime for rent, was brought to light during the trial of an injunction suit in the U.S. District Court in St. Louis on January 16, 1941. The Missouri state liquor control law forbids brewers, distillers, and wholesalers from having any financial interest, "directly or indirectly in the retail business for sale of intoxicating liquors" and specifies that breweries "shall not, directly or indirectly, loan, give away or furnish equipment, money, credit or property of any kind, except ordinary commercial credit for liquors sold to such retail dealers." The illegal practices were revealed during the trial of an injunction suit in which the trustee of the Gast Brewery of St. Louis sought to prevent a fixture and office equipment company from repossessing the fixtures of certain taverns which were customers of the brewery and whose notes given in payment for the fixtures the brewery had guaranteed. During the trial counsel for the brewery admitted that the practice was illegal, but asserted that it had been a common practice in the brewing industry. He testified that under such arrangements a former trustee of the brewery had paid bills amounting to \$29,000.

In the days prior to the enactment of national prohibition it was a common practice for breweries to own the fixtures and licenses of saloon keepers, and sometimes to pay their rent. This was a part of the intense rivalry between competing breweries for retail outlets and led to innumerable vicious practices as saloon keepers sought to attract custom in an ever-increasing competitive struggle. During prohibition days the wets constantly emphasized that when repeal came these practices would be outlawed. They have been outlawed, all right, but the liquor industry has proved over and over again that it has no hesitancy in going outside the law itself. In this case it is no mere irresponsible, fly-by-night tavern keeper who is guilty but the brewing industry itself.

## MISSOURI OUTLAWS BEER BOTTLE CAP REDEMPTION

Some time ago Missouri brewers hit upon a scheme of "direct consumer discounts" by offering to redeem beer bottle caps. Early in January, C. Roy Noel, supervisor of the Missouri Department of Liquor Control, acting upon an opinion received from the office of the Attorney General, notified all brewers within the state to refrain from this practice after February 1, 1941. Typical brewer reaction to efforts to keep the business on levels of decency was that of Griesedieck Bros. Brewing Co., St. Louis: "It is indeed unfortunate that we should have this privilege revoked." (Advt in St. Louis newspapers, Jan. 16-17, 1941)

## SELLS BABY'S CLOTHES FOR BOOZE

William Price, unemployed house painter of Atlantic City, N.J., was sentenced to two weeks in jail for non-support of his wife and two children on Feb. 8, when a probation officer testified that Price sold the furniture piece by piece "and everything else he could lay his hands on, including the baby's diapers, to buy booze."

Emergency Program (continued from page one)  
news, bulletins, papers, etc., to absentees in service at military camps or conscientious objector camps. (e) Send to the church nearest the camps where our members are stationed the names of our members, urging some contact. Also refer our members to the church where they will be known and received because of the introduction. (f) Counsel with church young people, whether contemplating enlistment or C.O. stand. (g) Present New Testaments to all called to defense camps or C.O. camps.

3. Give special prominence to humanitarian projects in the program of the church. In this form of the present government program the church can invoke God's blessing without reservation. (a) Endeavor to have food sent to the starving people of Europe. (b) Support in all possible ways such activities as the Infantile Paralysis Drive. (c) Encourage contributions to China Relief and other relief funds. (d) Encourage contributions to funds to provide for Civilian Public Service Camps where conscientious objectors may substitute constructive work for military training.

4. Promote the missionary program of the church with unusual vigor.

5. Publicize throughout the church the achievements and indications of growth of the World Council of Churches and all other world Christian movements.

6. Through the pulpit, church bulletins, discussion groups, etc., stress tolerance, understanding, appreciation of all peoples. Keep always uppermost in the church consciousness the 'super-national,' 'super-racial' nature of the Christian religion.

7. Emphasize the necessity of using the post-war world as the objective and basis of the program of the church. In planning services for immediate future needs the church must consider her responsibility for the more distant future when war shall have ceased. Avenues of influence and service must be kept open for that more important period."

Social Action Newsletter presents this program in the hope that it may stimulate other local churches to make similar plans. Careful planning to meet present conditions may help to prevent hysterical extremism should the international situation become even more serious than it is at present.

#### ILLINOIS CHURCH BUILDS INTERRACIAL FRIENDSHIP

For 5 years, Central church, Danville, Ills., Frank H. Kennedy, pastor, has sponsored an annual World Friendship School, with the purpose of building up within the church & the community an understanding of and appreciation for peoples of other races, nationalities, religions & cultures. The school is held 5 Sunday evenings beginning the first Sunday in Feb. -- total attendance this year 1400. School opens at 5:15 with primary, junior, intermediate, Y.P., and adult groups in study sessions. Following the 40-minute class periods supper is served, followed by a general program in the church sanctuary. This year in cooperation with the local round-table of the National Conference of Christians & Jews, a public forum was held featuring Rabbi Jacob Singer, Dr. Don Decour Drolet, French Consul General, a Catholic, and Dr. Stanley Crossland, of Chicago. The feature was broadcast by a local station. Scheduled for an hour, audience interest kept the forum going another half-hour.

#### Malvern Conference (continued from page one)

3. A cooperative commonwealth of Europe, in which the U.S. by implication would be an active partner.

4. Universal education of children and adolescents "to take their full share as Christian citizens in the life of the community - economic, cultural and spiritual."

5. Rights of labor "recognized as in principle equal to those of capital in the control of industry, whatever the means by which this transformation is effected."

6. Active participation by churchmen "in public and political life, both local and national, in labor unions, and all other bodies affecting public welfare ... (to) seek ways of expressing Christian principles through these channels."

7. Corporate and national reform. "We note the tendency to delegate our responsibilities to large corporate bodies which by their very nature must be at least partly irresponsible corporations in which we hold stock, the nation to which we belong, groups in which we hold membership, and even the Church itself. To the sin of pride we add the sin of evasion."

8. Social justice for groups and individuals to the end that the blight of the 'mass man,' who is conscious of no status spiritual or social, who is a mere item in the machinery of production, and who easily develops the herd psychology."

The C.L.I.D. also gave attention to self-reform on the part of the church, adopting such of the proposals of the Malvern group as are relevant to the church in America. Among the suggestions for self-reform are:

1. More active work by congregations in remediating social evils in their own locality, with "cells" formed to promote spiritual and social study and service.

2. A supplementary form of worship "so directed and conducted that its relevance to life and to man's actual needs is evident."

Active in the deliberations of the conference were such well known Episcopal church leaders as Bishop Edward L. Parsons of California, William B. Spofford, Vida D. Scudder, professor-emeritus of English at Wellesley, Mary van Kleek, director of the Russel Sage Foundation, and George Frederick Weimann. The findings of the conference will be turned over to an official commission of the General Convention headed by Bishop William Scarlett, of St. Louis, Missouri.

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